

COLORADO BIRD NOTES

Bulletin of the Colorado Bird Club

Vol. 1 No. 1

October 1953

This is the first issue of what we plan will be a monthly bulletin, replacing both the Yearbook and the monthly meeting and trip notice cards, to inform our members on Club business and membership matters, plans and reports of meetings and field trips, bird counts and other studies, unusual observations and current literature. Last year the Yearbook and a card each month cost a total of approximately \$70, including postage (not including the 8-page Christmas Count report). We estimate that, now that we have our own duplicating machine, a 5 to 7-page (one side) monthly paper can be issued for \$50 to \$60 a year. The Publications Committee invites all members to contribute news, reports on their birding activities and suggestions for improving this bulletin, including its name, or for making it more useful.

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ORGANIZATION OF THE COLORADO BIRD CLUB, 1953-1954

OFFICERS

President	John L. Chapin
Vice President	John W. Flavin
Recording Secretary	Phyllis Caswell
Corresponding Secretary	Catherine Hurlbutt
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Lillian Wangnild	(two years)
Robert E. Glover	(one year)
Donald M. Thatcher	(one year)
Ferd Kleinschnitz	(ex-officio)

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Field Trips and Projects

Robert E. Glover, Chairman	Sadie Morrison
John W. Flavin	Donald Thatcher
James Humphrey	Ruth Wheeler

Program and Membership

John W. Flavin, Chairman	Ferd Kleinschnitz
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Records

John L. Chapin, Chairman

Publications and Information

Donald Thatcher	} Co-chairmen	Mrs. Dorothy Kleinschnitz
Ferd Kleinschnitz		Mrs. Hazel Thatcher
Phyllis Caswell		Mrs. C. D. Voris
Mrs. A. H. Crow		

NEXT MONTH we plan to include the directory of members formerly contained in the Yearbook. Names, addresses and telephone numbers of new members will be listed each month thereafter. If your name and address, including zone number, as used in mailing this issue are not correct or complete, please notify one of the following:

Donald Thatcher, 2916 Perry St. Denver 12 Phone GL-7479
Mrs. A. H. Crow, 3272 Stuart St. Denver 12 " GL-4378

CLUB DUES for 1953-1954 are now payable. In keeping with rising costs, the Club voted at the May meeting to increase annual dues to two dollars. They may be paid at the monthly meetings or mailed to the Treasurer, Mrs. C. D. Voris, at 1085 Olive St., Denver.

A series of short sessions on BIRD IDENTIFICATION is planned, to be conducted in the Bird Room at the Museum during the hour preceding the monthly meetings, if justified by demand and attendance. Members are urged to attend and to invite any others who may be interested, especially youngsters (Scouts and others) for whom the regular meetings may be too late in the evening. See CALENDAR in this paper for announcement.

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FIELD TRIP REPORTS

The GENESEE MOUNTAIN PARK trip, September 13, was attended by six members, with walks in three different parts of the Park, led by Donald Thatcher. Twenty-eight species of birds were seen, all but five of which were summer resident species in the Park. The migrants were Turkey Vulture, Franklin's Gull, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Mountain Bluebird and Pink-sided Oregon Junco. Most abundant species were Audubon's Warbler (40) and Pygmy Nuthatch (35).

On September 19, eight members led by John Flavin made the trip to ECHO LAKE and vicinity. Only two species of hawks, for which the trip was planned, were seen: five or more Red-tailed and two Sparrow Hawks, all above timberline. Twenty-five species were seen, including a Horned Grebe on Echo Lake, two Ravens, several Pine Grosbeaks, and a singing Dipper at Chicago Reservoir. Most abundant species was the Water Pipit (17).

The trip to BARR LAKE and vicinity, October 3, was made in cool, cloudy weather, with six people attending. Fifty-five species were seen, including six Ducks, mostly Pintails and Ruddy's, and seven shorebirds. Most unusual species were a Sandhill Crane, circling overhead, and a Red-breasted Nuthatch. Raptors seen were Red-tailed Hawk (3), Rough-legged Hawk (2), Turkey Vulture (2), and one each of Marsh Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Pigeon Hawk, Prairie Falcon and Peregrine Falcon. About 50 Barn Swallows and one Tree Swallow were late migrants.

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Leaders of all field trips are requested to furnish, as soon as possible after a trip, a brief report including number of people attending, number of bird species observed and observations of unusual species, abundance or behavior.

BREEDING BIRD POPULATION STUDIES

During the past three breeding seasons, the writer has carried on breeding bird population studies in three areas in Genesee Mountain Park, in the foothills about 15 miles west of Denver, aided in one area by several other members of the Club. These studies are conducted as part of a nation-wide project of the National Audubon Society and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, who publish the results annually in the December issue of "Audubon Field Notes", this season being the 17th. During the past eight years, an average of 31 studies has been published each year, of which average only four were made in the West. In brief, these are ecological studies intended to determine the species and numbers of birds breeding in known areas of various uniform habitats, especially those typical of large regions. Repetition of these studies over several years should indicate changes in bird populations resulting from changing environments or from cyclic fluctuations in numbers of the various species. Field work consists essentially of locating on a new copy of a map of a study area for each of several trips all birds seen or heard, together with notes on their species, sex and activity. At the close of the season, the data from all trips are transferred to a separate map sheet for each species, and the probable territory of each pair of birds is thus determined. Locating nests is not necessary, but is very useful if the observers have time and patience for searching and watching.

Two of the areas chosen for study are of 20 acres each in the approximately 90-year-old forest stands on the north slope of Genesee Mountain. One is of nearly pure Lodgepole Pine, typical of the lower part of the Canadian life zone, and the other is principally of Douglas Fir and typical of the Transition life zone at its upper limits. The third area, of 67 acres, is of practically pure, all-aged Ponderosa Pine forest, 50 acres of southerly slope or level and 17 acres of northerly slopes, and is typical of the greater part of the Transition life zone. The first two areas were studied during three seasons and the other during two.

The accompanying tables are summaries of the breeding bird populations of the three areas, with the species arranged in the order of their abundance, as averaged for the two or three seasons of study. Fractional pairs (or birds) may be reconciled by considering the numbers as representing territories, which may lie only partly within the study area, rather than as birds. A plus (+) indicates less than half a territory or pair. Following the numbers of each species are the numbers of nests (N) or of pairs with young (Y) noted.

A few of the unusual findings which help to compensate for the confining nature of this type of bird study might be mentioned here: Red Crossbills nesting in mid-winter (Dec. 1951 to March 1952). Two nests of the Brown Creeper, of which the owners of one were much-photographed by Messers Bailey and Niedrach of the Museum. A Mountain Chickadee's nest made entirely of rabbit fur in a roadside dirt bank. Simultaneous nests in the same tree of Williamson's Sapsucker and Violet-green Swallow, also those of White-breasted Nuthatch and Western Bluebird. A Blue Grouse hen with four young. A Bobcat in the Douglas Fir, pursued by several Magpies.

The following assisted the writer (in the Ponderosa Pine area) during one or both seasons: Lang Baily, Phyllis Caswell, John Chapin, John Flavin, Sadie Morrison, Bess Phelan, George Sciple and Hazel Thatcher. Other members of the Club are urged to participate in these studies next year, or to start new ones in suitable, convenient areas.

Lodgepole Pine Forest

	Year	1951	1952	1953
	Trips	10	5	5
	Dates	May 13	May 12	May 28
	Hours	to July 14 15	to Aug. 23 5	to July 4 8½
Audubon Warbler		4½	3	4
Mountain Chickadee		2 (1Y)	3	2
Gray-headed Junco		1½ (1Y)	2½	3 (2Y)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		-	1	3
Brown Creeper		1 (1N)	1	1 (2N)
Hermit Thrush		1	1	1
Pine Siskin		1 (1N)	2	-
White-breasted Nuthatch		1	-	1 (1N)
Red-breasted Nuthatch		1	-	-
Red Crossbill		1	-	-
Hairy Woodpecker		-	½	-
Western Flycatcher		-	½	-
Cooper's Hawk		+	-	-
American Magpie		-	-	+
American Crow		-	-	4 (1Y)
No. species	15	10	9	9
No. pairs or territorial males { on area		14	14½	15
per 100 acres		70	73	75

Douglas Fir Forest

	Year	1951	1952	1953
	Trips	10	5	5
	Dates	May 13	May 12	May 28
	Hours	to July 14 15	to Aug. 23 5	to July 4 6
Audubon Warbler		3½ (1Y)	4	2½
Gray-headed Junco		2 (1Y)	2 (1Y)	1½ (1Y)
Mountain Chickadee		1½ (1Y)	2	2 (1N)
Brown Creeper		½	1	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		-	1	1½
Hermit Thrush		1 (1Y)	1	1
Pine Siskin		-	1	1
American Magpie		1 (1N)	-	+
Western Flycatcher		½	-	½
White-breasted Nuthatch		-	1	-
Pygmy Nuthatch		-	-	1 (1N)
American Robin		-	-	1 (1Y)
Western Tanager		-	½	½
Red-breasted Nuthatch		½	-	-
Cooper's Hawk		+	-	-
Red-tailed Hawk		-	-	+
No. species	16	9	9	13
No. pairs or territorial males { on area		10½	13½	13½
per 100 acres		53	68	68

Ponderosa Pine Forest

	Year	1952	1953
	Trips	25	17
		Dec. 3, 1951	March 27
		to Aug. 23	to July 14
Hours		70	40
Pygmy Nuthatch	6 (3N)	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ (6N)	
Gray-headed Junco	6 (2N, 3Y)	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ (3Y)	
Mountain Chickadee	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ (5N)	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ (4N)	
Audubon's Warbler	4	5	
American Robin	4 (3N, 2Y)	3 (2Y)	
Chipping Sparrow	4 (1N, 2Y)	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ (2Y)	
Red Crossbill	3 (3N)	1	
Steller's Jay	2	2	
Western Bluebird	2 (1N)	2 (2N)	
Pine Siskin	2	2	
Western Wood Pewee	1	2	
Violet-green Swallow	1	2 (2N)	
Western Tanager	1	2	
Williamson's Sapsucker	1 (1N)	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ (2N)	
White-breasted Nuthatch	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ (1N)	1 (1N)	
Solitary Vireo	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 (1N)	
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	1	1	
Hairy Woodpecker	1	1	
Hermit Thrush	1 (1Y)	1	
Townsend's Solitaire	1	1 (1N)	
Western Flycatcher	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Common Nighthawk	-	1	
House Wren	-	1	
Virginia's Warbler	-	1	
Red-tailed Hawk	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	-	
Cassin's Finch	-	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Green-tailed Towhee	-	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Blue Grouse	-	+ (1Y)	
No. species	28	21	27
No. pairs or territorial males	{ on area	49	61
	{ per 100 acres	74	92

--Donald M. Thatcher

The July-August AUDUBON MAGAZINE reports another step in conservation in which this Club has been interested. The Alaska Territorial Legislature has recently repealed the two-dollar bounty on the Bald Eagle. This action followed the Order by Secretary of the Interior Chapman of July 1, 1952, making the indiscriminate taking of Bald Eagles a Federal offense.

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Have you read "The Miracle of Birds", by Alan Davoe, published in the October AMERICAN MERCURY and condensed in the October READER'S DIGEST?

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The Denver Museum of Natural History has just published its Museum Pictorial no. 9, "The Red Crossbills of Colorado", by A. M. Bailey, R. J. Niedrach and A. Lang Baily. It contains interesting, comprehensive descriptions of the races of the Red Crossbill and of studies of that species in Colorado. Several of the excellent illustrations are of birds and nests (nests 1 and 2) mentioned in the report on the breeding bird populations in Ponderosa Pine, elsewhere in this paper.

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PERSONAL NEWS

Mr. and Mrs. Ferd Kleinschnitz have recently taken into their home for adoption two little boys, Kurt and Fred, aged 3 and 1½.

Lang Baily, our Vice President of last year, has left Denver to become Curator of Exhibits at the Davenport Public Museum, at Davenport, Iowa. Lang's leadership in our meetings and projects will be missed and we wish him the best of luck with his new position.

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Keep a bird list for each trip. Get into the habit of checking off every bird you see. Still better, keep count of the numbers seen and the number of times a species is seen, together with the locality, habitat, weather and total time you spent looking. Every birder should have a LIFE list, a YEAR'S list and a TRIP list. At the end of the year, we'll publish the number of species everyone gets on his year's list.

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Learn to squeak small birds out of dense cover or marshes so you can see them. Put two separated fingers in the mouth and exert inward pressure. Regulate the distance between the fingers until you get the noise that draws the small birds out. Best subjects are chickadees, kinglets and warblers, but sometimes weasels, horses and cows will come.

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A Flicker-sized bird hovering over a field is probably a Sparrow Hawk. Over water it is probably a Kingfisher.

CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

October

- 18 (Sun.) CLEAR CREEK AREA east of Golden. Late fall migrants of Upper Sonoran Zone, land and marsh birds. Robert Glover, leader. PE-8757 Meet W. 44th and Sheridan Blvd. 1P.M. 25¢*
- 25 (Sun.) MARSTON LAKE and RED ROCKS PARK. Late fall migration - water birds, hawks - Upper Sonoran Zone. John Chapin, leader. PL5-0862. Meet W. Colfax & Sheridan Blvd. 6:30 AM Bring lunch. 50¢*
- 27 (Tues.) Identification of Winter Birds. 7 PM Denver Museum of Natural History, Bird Room.
- 27 (Tues.) Monthly Meeting. 8 PM Denver Museum of Natural History, Bird Room. Talk on "Anatomy and Physiology of Birds" by John Chapin.

NOTICE:---We have been requested to use the north (employees') entrance of the Museum, as lighting the main entrance attracts numerous visitors after the closing hour.

November

- 7 (Sat.) WATERTON. Late fall migrants and winter birds - Upper Sonoran Zone. Jim Humphrey, leader. GR-3800. Meet Alameda in block west of Broadway. 10 AM Bring lunch. 50¢*
- 14 (Sat.) DANIELS PARK and vicinity. Late fall migrants and winter birds - Transition Zone. Ruth Wheeler, leader. GL-3924 Meet Yale Ave. & University Blvd. 1:00 PM 50¢*
- 21 (Sat.) These week-ends and those in December to be used for
22 (Sun.) scouting Christmas Count areas. Details in next issue.
28 (Sat.)
29 (Sun.)

All those planning to attend trips should call the leader the day before, if possible.

* Suggested payment for transportation if you ride in someone else's car.